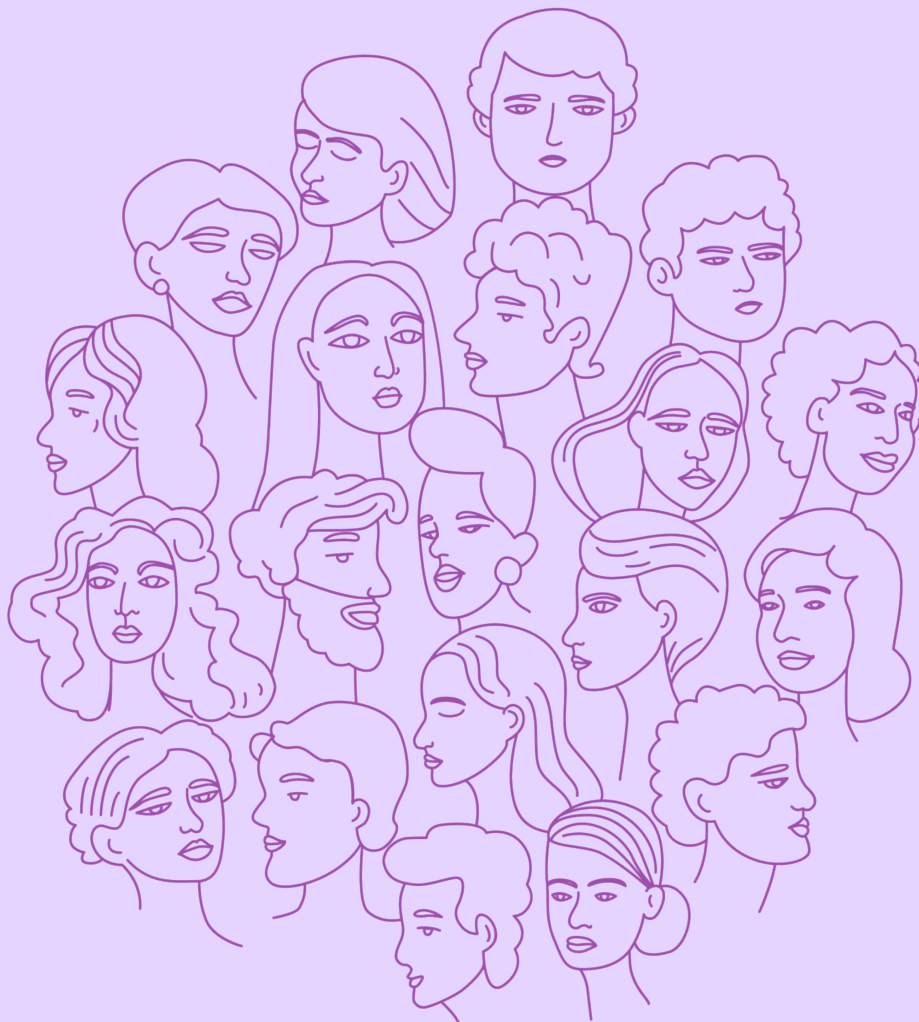


# Peer-Centred Advocacy in Action

Strengthening participant voice,  
engagement and community-led change



## Territorial Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that our main office is located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəyʼəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and that our work across British Columbia spans the territories of more than 200 First Nations. We also acknowledge the First Nations, Métis and Inuit who live in our communities.

YWCA BC is committed to truth and reconciliation. This includes understanding the truth and impact of our shared colonial history, making positive changes within our organization and taking actions that advances safety, justice and equity for Indigenous peoples.



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## Introduction

Peer-centred advocacy builds collective power and equips community leaders to drive tactical and systemic change.

YWCA City Shift's Peer-Centred Advocacy Council was created for that purpose. The pilot cohort, alumni of YWCA Single Mothers' Support Services, gained practical advocacy tools while offering insight into how YWCA BC can more meaningfully engage participants across the organization's advocacy efforts.

Beyond skills, this council developed practices that strengthen participant-centred work. These insights shaped this guidebook and continue to inform how the YWCA engages, listens and collaborates with participants in meaningful and impactful ways.

## Why This Guidebook Was Created

YWCA BC has long championed the rights, safety and well-being of women, gender-diverse people and families across the province. Our advocacy is grounded in what we see every day in our programs: women navigating impossible choices between housing and food, single parents balancing work and care without support, survivors of violence trying to heal and rebuild stability, and communities facing intersecting barriers that limit their ability to thrive.

Across all of this work, one truth is constant: advocacy is most powerful, credible and transformative when it is grounded in the real experiences of the people most affected by the issues.

This guidebook shows what becomes possible when those voices are not only consulted, but resourced and empowered to lead.



## Advocacy designed with communities, not for them

We convened a cohort of women parenting alone to explore systemic change shaped by people who experience precarious housing, gender-based violence, unaffordable child care, employment instability and the ongoing impacts of gender inequality. Shared experiences built trust; diversity of culture, age, identity, circumstance and perspective made the process more nuanced and reflective of the communities we serve.

The result is a model for advocacy by single mothers and for single mothers; one that treats lived experience as expertise and positions participants as leaders, strategists and co-creators of solutions.

## Building a sustainable peer-centred advocacy model

This pilot was made possible through the support of Women and Gender Equality Canada. It represents the beginning of a longer-term shift in how YWCA BC engages the people we serve in shaping the systems that shape their lives.

As we move forward, we will:

- Continue hosting participant engagement sessions to inform our advocacy.
- Create pathways for participants to co-design solutions, lead conversations and influence public policy.
- Explore opportunities to scale peer advocacy practices across other YWCA programs.



## How To Use This Guidebook

This guidebook supports anyone seeking to deepen participant engagement, whether through a peer-centred advocacy council or by integrating participant-centred practices into current programs and advocacy efforts.

It introduces the core principles, shares key learnings from the pilot and offers adaptable approaches that can be applied across a range of contexts.

Use this guide to:

- **Understand the model:** Learn what a peer-centred advocacy council is and how participants' insight strengthens advocacy.
- **Inform your planning:** Explore examples of timelines, recruitment strategies, team roles and session structures that can support the development of your council.
- **Customise your approach:** Adapt the sample processes, schedules and budget considerations to fit the capacity, goals and realities of your team or community.
- **Support meaningful participation:** Use tips and lessons learned to create an environment where participants feel better prepared, supported and able to contribute meaningfully.

See Appendix A for more information about YWCA BC and YWCA City Shift.



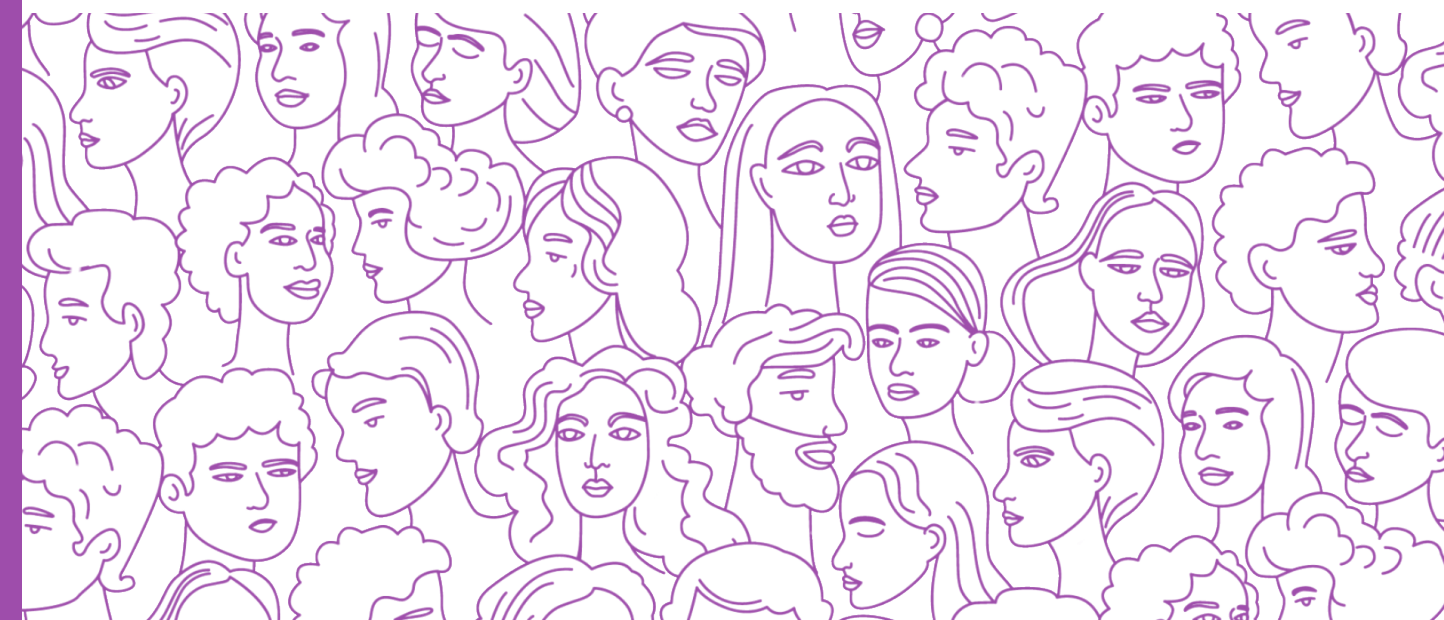
## What is a Peer-Centred Advocacy Council?

A peer-centred advocacy council brings people with shared experiences together to identify issues, shape solutions and advocate for meaningful change.

In YWCA City Shift's pilot, an educational component built understanding of effective collective advocacy. By centering participant perspectives, the council identified who is most affected and developed solutions led by those directly impacted.

### What makes a peer-centred advocacy council unique?

<b>Empowerment through lived experience</b>	Members set priorities grounded in their needs and insights.
<b>Community based</b>	Councils are made up of people who experience the issues firsthand. Professionals can support implementation later.
<b>Meaningful input</b>	Peer councils don't simply "represent" community voices — <b>they are the voice.</b>
<b>Equity and inclusion</b>	Design for accessibility: honouraria, travel, stipends, childminding and other supports reduce barriers.

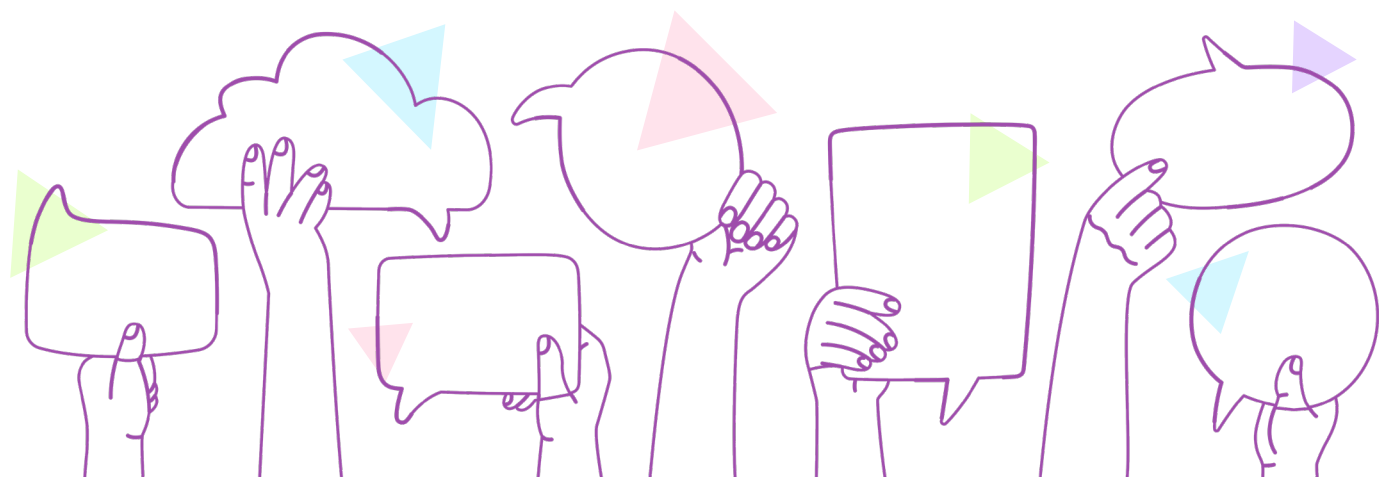


## How the Council Advanced YWCA BC's Strategic Priorities

The Peer-Centred Advocacy Council moves YWCA BC's 2024-2029 Strategic Plan from vision to action by centering lived experience and collective advocacy.

Below are examples of how the council supported key objectives:

YWCA BC's 2024 - 2029 Strategic Plan	Peer-Centred Advocacy Council
<p>"Share knowledge to build capacity and equip participants to advocate individually and collectively" pg. 9</p> <p>"Participants have skills and support to advocate for systemic change" pg. 5</p>	Interactive workshops and collaborative learning connected lived experience to systems change and informed broader advocacy and government relations at the YWCA.
"Collaborate with community to deliver innovative programming" pg. 7	Co-designed and delivered community-driven programming with partners that responds to real needs and amplifies participant voices.
"Cultivate collaboration across departments" pg. 11	Integrated front-line experience into council structure, supports and focus areas through cross-departmental coordination.



## Creating a Peer-Centred Advocacy Council

Building a council requires intention, flexibility and thoughtful design. Create a structure that centres lived experience, strengthens leadership and supports collaboration—adapted to your capacity, budget and resources.

The steps below reflect lessons from our pilot and offer guidance you can scale.

### Laying the foundation

The pilot	Considerations for your council
<p>A 15-month workshop series built advocacy skills among alumni of YWCA Single Mothers' programs, meeting once a month for two hours in the evening.</p> <p>Participants selected two priorities that were meaningful to them and aligned with organizational goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediate resources offered to survivors fleeing domestic violence, including systems navigation and advocacy support,</li> <li>2. Trauma-informed training for first responders, lawyers and judges on gender-based violence.</li> </ol> <p>The series culminated in a campaign framework and a short documentary highlighting the process and impact.</p>	<p>Adapt the cadence to your capacity, whether through a shorter or longer series. Allow time for trust, skills and collective action. Work closely with frontline employees and program managers to shape schedule, outreach and supports so the council is accessible and responsive.</p>

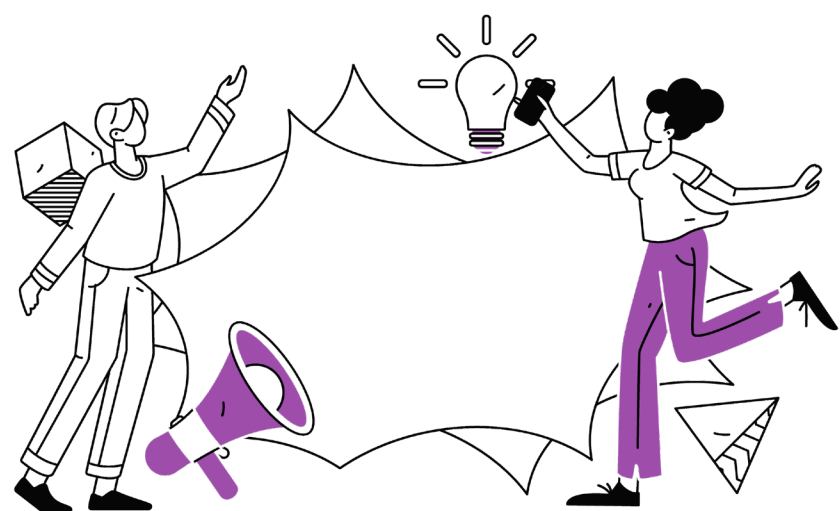
## Building the team

A coordinated team keeps planning and delivery smooth while maintaining a participant-centred approach. Each role plays an important part in creating a consistent, supportive and inclusive experience for participants.

### Core roles include:

- **Facilitator:** Guides learning, encourages discussion and centres participants' voices.
- **Coordinator:** Manages scheduling, communications, materials and supports (meals, childminding, transportation and more).
- **Active listener:** Offers grounded, compassionate presence during sessions, and follow-up care when needed. This role helps maintain emotional safety and provides gentle support when content feels activating.

The pilot	Considerations for your council
An internal coordinator, an internal active listener, an external facilitator and childminding staff. Advocacy and Single Mothers teams coordinated content and logistics across the 15 months.	Smaller teams can combine roles or share responsibilities across programs. Partner with external facilitators for content; keep internal focus on logistics and engagement. Hold brief, pre-session planning and post-session debriefs to stay responsive.

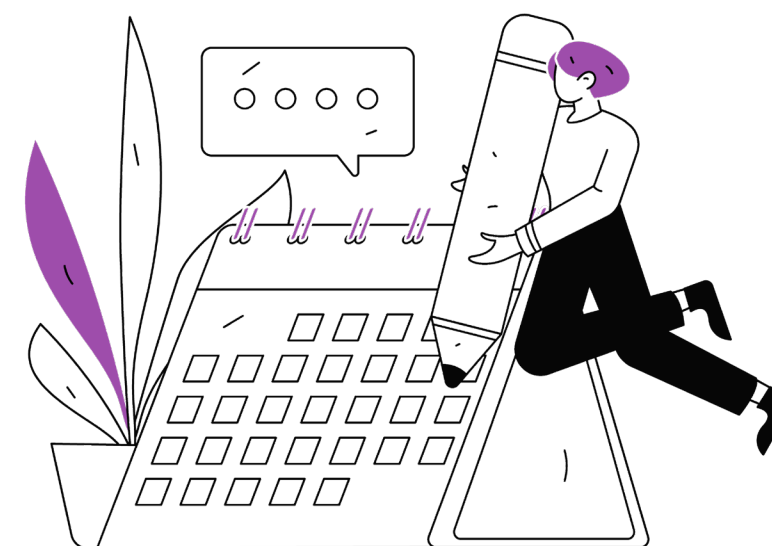


## Recruitment and engagement

Plan recruitment so expectations, time commitments and supports are clear. Successful recruitment starts with relationships so collaborate with teams or partners who engage directly with your target group.

The pilot	Considerations for your council
<p>Beginning in early fall 2024, teams met bi-weekly to discuss potential candidates, onboarding, meeting guidelines, honouraria, childminding and transit assistance.</p> <p>The team sought applicants who could commit to the council timeline and were genuinely interested in collaborative advocacy. No prior experience was required—only a willingness to learn and contribute.</p> <p>Applications were open through November 2024; interviews ran from November 4-December 6; onboarding letters followed.</p>	<p>Share clear, accessible information about time commitments and supports (honouraria, childminding, meals or transportation). Consider informational sessions and multiple application formats (online forms, video submissions or telephone interviews) to increase accessibility.</p>

See Appendix B for samples of YWCA City Shift's call for applications, application questions, invitations to interview, interview questions and onboarding letter.



## Learning framework

The goal was to build participants' capacity, collectively plan a campaign and advocate for change. Sessions ran two hours monthly over 15 months, with a final session inviting the community to learn and get involved.

Consider the components below when designing your council's timeline:

- Meet as often as capacity allows; consistency supports participation.
- If community-building is a core goal, a longer arc across a year may be more effective than a short intensive timeline.
- People learn differently; build in time to digest new information and share ideas.
- Consider children's schedules when working with parents.



## Learning modules

<b>Community building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions and trust building</li> <li>• Shared agreements</li> <li>• Orientation to the council arc</li> <li>• Rest, rituals and celebrations</li> <li>• Community care for change makers</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles in organizing and participation styles</li> <li>• Foundations of organizing for change</li> <li>• Understanding government and jurisdiction</li> <li>• Power mapping</li> <li>• Theory of change</li> <li>• Spectrum of allies</li> <li>• Advocacy vs. activism</li> <li>• Identifying your decision maker</li> <li>• Learning from decision makers</li> <li>• Trauma-informed storytelling</li> <li>• Public speaking and media training</li> </ul>
<b>Ideation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the advocacy issue</li> <li>• Consensus building and issue selection</li> <li>• Research and issue landscape analysis</li> <li>• Visioning for change</li> <li>• Identifying gaps and opportunities</li> <li>• Message development</li> <li>• Bringing it all together</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation, mobilization and monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy tactics</li> <li>• Building coalitions and partnerships</li> <li>• Preparing campaign materials</li> <li>• Campaign launch preparation</li> <li>• Campaign monitoring</li> <li>• Revising your strategy</li> </ul>

See Appendix C for a full breakdown of YWCA City Shift's Peer-Centred Advocacy Council session arc.

## Budget

The budget prioritized participant care and barrier reduction. As the cohort was run by YWCA BC, some overhead (computers, internet, printing and meeting space) was supported by the organization.

The supports included transportation subsidies, group meals before each session, on-site childminding and prepaid grocery cards in lieu of a monetary stipend.

### Key Budget Categories

<b>Participant support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honouraria</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Childminding</li> <li>• Children’s activities (games, toys, crafts, etc.)</li> <li>• Meals and refreshments</li> </ul>
<b>Program delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitators</li> <li>• Guest speakers</li> <li>• Session supplies (binders, flipchart, pens, markers, handouts)</li> <li>• Printing and copying</li> <li>• Room(s), tables and chairs</li> <li>• Audio-visual equipment (projector, smartboard, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative and staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and recruitment</li> <li>• Scheduling and participant communication</li> <li>• Evaluation and follow-up</li> <li>• Curriculum development and content planning</li> </ul>
<b>Special elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gifts of appreciation (participants or speakers)</li> <li>• Community building or celebration (social building events for council members)</li> <li>• One-time purchases</li> </ul>

See Appendix D for a full breakdown of the City Shift Peer-Centred Advocacy Council budget breakdown.

## Feedback Loop

Build a consistent feedback loop so the council remains responsive to participant needs. We used **progress surveys, quarterly post-participation surveys and facilitator debriefs**. These tools allowed us to assess learning, understand whether we were meeting our goals and make adjustments as needed.

- **Progress surveys:** Administered at the beginning, middle and end of the council arc to assess participants’ confidence, skills development and support needs.
- **Post-participation surveys:** Completed quarterly by participants to gather session reflections, facilitation and overall experience.
- **Facilitator debriefs:** Organizers met post-session to reflect on what went well, identify areas for adjustment and respond to any emerging participant needs.

### Feedback loop options:

<b>Session reflections</b>	Spend the last 5 - 10 minutes of each session asking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What worked well today?</li> <li>• What felt unclear or rushed?</li> <li>• What do you need next time?</li> </ul>
<b>Anonymous feedback box</b>	A physical or digital option for private input at any time.
<b>One-on-one check-ins</b>	Offer brief check-ins with the facilitator or coordinator.
<b>Pulse check polls</b>	Quick digital polls to gauge clarity or confidence after major concepts or activities.
<b>Learning journals</b>	Provide a notebook for personal reflection.
<b>Exit conversations</b>	At the end of the council, offer short voluntary exit interviews.

See Appendix E for samples of YWCA City Shift’s post-participation surveys and progress surveys.

## Challenges

Coordinating busy parents is challenging. We aimed to create a cohesive experience that would yield one or two advocacy priorities for YWCA BC to carry forward after the council concluded.

### Time

Learning new skills and building the arc of an advocacy campaign can be quite intensive. We chose to hold sessions on weekday evenings to fit it in with the rhythm of commuting rather than add an extra activity to council member's weekends. Two-hour blocks to learn and practice new skills often felt rushed and challenged our goal of building community. We adapted agendas and schedules to support different learning styles and paces.

### Space

In-person sessions best supported community building and collective work.

### People power

Delivering a learning program while filming a documentary required a variety of skills. We assessed workload and skillsets and sought an external expert to design and deliver the program content.



## Actions After the Council

After 15 months of learning, community building and advocacy planning, council members clarified the priorities they felt were most urgent. Their work deepened YWCA BC's understanding of what matters to single mothers and informed how we approach participant engagement across the organization.

## Meaningful Participant Engagement

Centre participant voices. It reflects our commitment to listening deeply, honouring community knowledge and ensuring that the people most impacted by our work help shape the direction of our services and advocacy efforts. Meaningful engagement goes beyond consultation; it builds trust, centres dignity and invites participants to define issues, shape solutions and influence systems that affect their lives.

When participants are empowered to identify issues, contribute priorities and engage in decision-making, advocacy becomes more responsive, relevant and impactful.

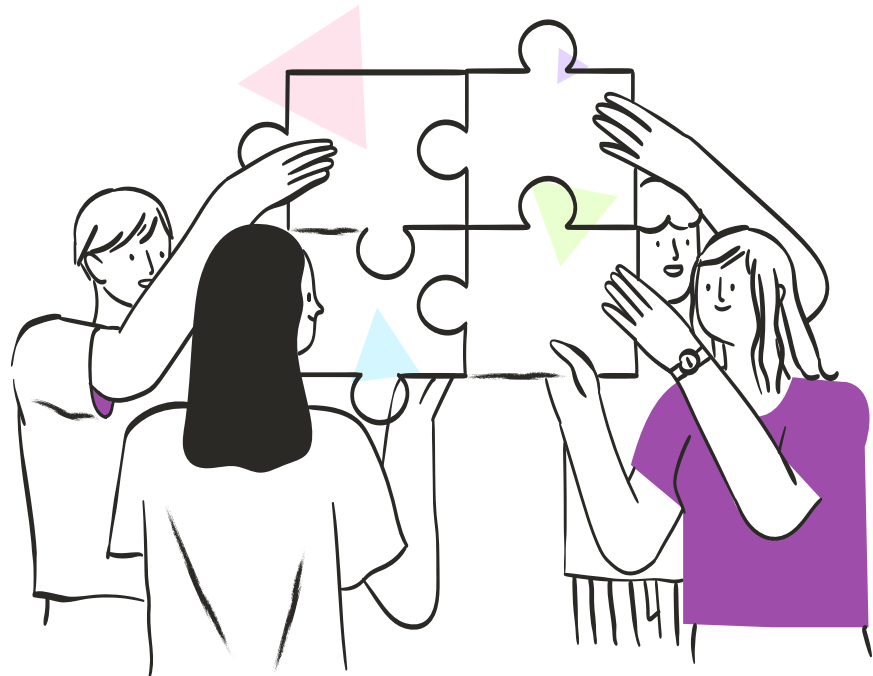
Embedding this approach:

- Position participants as experts on issues that affect them
- Respect the diverse ways people choose to share insights
- Identify systemic barriers and design solutions that are grounded in community realities
- Creates pathways for participants to build confidence, leadership and agency



## A roadmap for meaningful participant engagement

- 1. Listen with purpose**  
Create safe, accessible and culturally responsive opportunities to share experiences and ideas. Be transparent about why you are gathering insight.
- 2. Reflect and analyze**  
Reflect and identify themes, patterns and systemic barriers.
- 3. Align with organizational priorities**  
Connect insights to organizational goals and advocacy focus.
- 4. Co-define the advocacy issue**  
Develop a shared understanding of what matters most to participants.
- 5. Co-design ideas and solutions**  
Collaborate to explore ideas and pathways forward.
- 6. Shareback**  
Communicate how participant insight shaped decisions, next steps or actions.
- 7. Maintain and sustain relationships**  
Maintain ongoing, reciprocal relationships through updates, future opportunities and continued dialogue. Engagement should be relational, not transactional.



## Ways to engage program participants in advocacy

Meaningful engagement strengthens our work: programs remain responsive; advocacy reflects realities and priorities; participants build confidence and leadership; equity, inclusion and cultural safety guide how we work.

### Single session

- 1. Focus groups**  
Structured discussions that allow multiple participants to share thoughts, feelings and attitudes on a specific topic.
- 2. Interviews**  
One-to-one conversations guided by open-ended questions to gather in-depth insights.

### Multiple Session Engagement Methods

- 1. Community review panels**  
A participant group convened two or more times per year to review advocacy priorities, policy recommendations or campaign strategies.
- 2. Participant advisory circles**  
Short-term ongoing advisory groups offering insight on a specific advocacy issue. Unlike councils, they do not include a formal learning component, but focus on listening and gathering guidance from participants to strengthen advocacy priorities and recommendations.
- 3. Peer-centred advocacy councils**  
Sustained, participant-led councils that build collective capacity and leadership.



## Key Takeaways

- 1. Relationships come first.**  
Partner with teams who have strong relationships with participants. Trust is the foundation of safety, meaningful engagement and successful recruitment.
- 2. Accessibility, compensation and participant supports are essential.**  
Budget for honouraria, transportation, meals and childminding from the start. Reducing barriers is a core requirement, not an add-on.
- 3. Recruitment must be clear, transparent and accessible.**  
Offer informational sessions, use plain-language materials and provide multiple application formats so participants can self-select.
- 4. A strong delivery team is essential.**  
Facilitators, coordinators and active listeners each play a critical role in guiding learning, managing logistics and supporting emotional safety.
- 5. Co-create a community agreement.**  
This sets norms for communication, safety and shared accountability.
- 6. Build a structured, paced learning arc.**  
Include community-building, advocacy skills, systems literacy, ideation and campaign development to move from insight to action.
- 7. Participatory methods support meaningful decision-making.**  
Consensus-building, facilitated issue selection, journey mapping and participatory decision-making ensure priorities are owned by participants.
- 8. Regular feedback loops keep the program responsive.**  
Progress surveys, session reflections, facilitator debriefs and one-on-one check-ins help refine content, address needs early and maintain a responsive process.
- 9. Plan for care and community-building in every step.**  
Food, grounding practices, rest and rituals strengthen belonging and support participants as they engage in work that can feel emotionally heavy.
- 10. Centre participants as decision-makers.**  
Council members define the issues, shape solutions and guide advocacy directions. Staff create the conditions for leadership.

## Conclusion

The Peer-Centred Advocacy Council demonstrates what is possible when people most connected to an issue shape the solutions. Throughout this pilot, participants strengthened their skills and confidence, while building community and advancing priorities grounded in their lived realities.

The model is both practical and adaptable. With intention, care and collaboration, teams can integrate these approaches across programs and engagement. When we remove barriers, share power and invest in participants' capacity, advocacy becomes more grounded, relevant and effective.

We hope this guide supports you in bringing these practices to life, helping build a future where community members lead conversations that shape policies and systems.



## Appendix A

### YWCA BC

YWCA BC is a registered charity, gender equity advocate and community service provider. We deliver affordable housing, early learning and child care, training and employment services and a range of holistic programs that help support individual, collective and economic well-being.

#### Vision

We boldly envision a just and equitable world for women, families and allies.

#### Mission

We advance gender equity alongside women, families, Two-Spirit and gender diverse people through advocacy and integrated services that help support personal, collective and economic wellbeing.

#### Values

Our values align and unite us. They articulate how we show up for each other. They inform our interactions, guide us in challenging situations and are reflected in our decision-making.

### YWCA City Shift

Since 2022, YWCA BC has had the honour of leading the City Shift Project. Learn more about the project here: [YWCA City Shift | YWCA BC](#).

## Appendix B

### Call for Applications: YWCA City Shift Peer-Centred Council

Dear Alumni,

We are excited to announce the launch of the City Shift Peer-Centred Advocacy Council, designed specifically for alumni of the YWCA Single Mothers programs. We are looking for 15 council members who will come together with their fellow graduates to make a real impact in their community!

This council will empower members with the skills and knowledge needed to influence public policy, drive awareness and advocate for systemic change.

The first council meeting will be held on **Monday, January 20th at 6:00pm**. Following this first gathering, meetings will be held monthly until **March 2026** (locations will rotate between the YWCA Program Centre and other locations between the tri-cities and Fraser Valley area depending on member locations).

Registrations open **Friday, November 1st** and will close **Saturday, November 30th**. Interviews for prospective members will be conducted throughout November and early December.

Please note that as there are only 15 spots available on the council, applicants can expect to receive a decision on their application during the first week of December after completing an interview with YWCA City Shift staff.

Please visit [ywcabc.org/csadvisory](http://ywcabc.org/csadvisory) to learn more and to apply.

We encourage you to join one of our upcoming information sessions on **Thursday, November 7th at 7:00pm** or **Sunday, November 17th at 10:00am** to learn more about the Peer-Centred Advocacy Council. We will be offering a \$50 gift card honorarium to those who attend the information session. Please click here to visit our Eventbrite and register for an information session.

## Appendix B (Continued)

### As a council member, you will:

- Develop and deepen your advocacy skills
- Learn how local and provincial governments work
- Gain the tools necessary to advocate for systems change

### What's included:

- Regular monthly in-person meetings
- Honorariums for attendance
- Childminding services
- Food and drinks
- Transportation subsidies
- Access to YWCA Health + Fitness Centre passes

### Important requirements:

- Must have completed a YWCA Single Mothers program
- Able to attend regular monthly meetings in-person
- Committed to serving on the council for 12-15 months

For more information on the council, please contact X

### Application Questions

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Preferred Name
4. What are your preferred pronouns?
5. Phone Number
6. Email Address
7. What is your street address?
8. City
9. Postal Code
10. Which YWCA program(s) have you previously attended?
11. Were you referred by a YWCA staff member?
12. What is the name of the person who referred you?
13. Tell us about yourself and why you are interested in joining the Peer-Centred Advocacy Council?

## Appendix B (Continued)

### Invitation to Interview

Hi [name],

Thank you again for your interest in the Peer-Centred Advocacy Council and for taking the time to speak with me today.

As discussed, the City Shift team will be conducting your virtual interview. During this interview, the team will go over a few more details about the Peer-Centred Advocacy Council and ask a few questions to get a sense of what you hope to gain from the Council and how we can best support you if you are invited to join.

Please give yourself 5-10 minutes ahead of your scheduled time to download the Zoom application and ensure both your mic and camera are working. Please see below the Zoom details for your interview below:

### YWCA is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

#### Join Zoom Meeting

[link]

**Meeting ID:** [meeting ID]

**Passcode:** [passcode]

If you have any difficulty or need help troubleshooting, please email [name] at [email].

Thank you!

## Appendix B (Continued)

### Interview Questions

1. Tell us about yourself (This can include hobbies, passions, or something you are excited about)
2. Can you tell us about why you are interested in joining the Council?
3. What skills are you hoping to gain by participating in the Peer Centred Advocacy Council?
4. What would success look like to you at the end of this council?
5. Are you currently working or going to school?
6. If yes, how many hours per week?
7. The council will begin on January 20th, 2025, with monthly meetings over a 15-month period. Are you able to accommodate the demands of the council?
8. Do you have any upcoming appointments or commitments in which you may be absent from council meetings?
9. How can we support you with transportation?
10. Do you have any allergies or dietary restrictions?
11. Will you require childminding during meetings or events?
12. How old is your child/children?
13. Does your child/children have any specific needs or preferences that we should be aware of?
14. Do you have any questions for us or is there anything else that you would like to share?

## Appendix B (Continued)

### Onboarding Letter

#### Start Date

The first meeting will take place on Monday, January 20th at 6:00pm at the YWCA BC Program Centre (please see address below).

#### Location

Council meetings will be delivered in an in-person format with primary sessions taking place at the YWCA BC Program Centre.

#### Attendance

Before accepting this offer, please ensure that you are able to participate in the scheduled sessions. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [name] at [email].

Please review the Council meeting schedule.

Meeting	Date	Time
#1	Monday, January 20th, 2025	6:00pm-6:30pm: Dinner 6:30pm-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#2	Monday, February 10th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#3	Monday, March 10th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#4	Monday, April 14th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#5	Monday, May 12th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#6	Monday, June 16th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#7	Monday, July 14th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#8	Monday, August 11th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#9	Monday, September 15th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting

## Appendix B (Continued)

Meeting	Date	Time
#10	Monday, October 20st, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#11	Monday, November 17th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#12	Monday, December 15th, 2025	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#13	Monday, January 12th, 2026	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#14	Monday, February 23rd, 2026	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting
#15	Monday, March 16th, 2026	5:30-6:00pm: Dinner 6:00-8:00pm: Council Meeting

### Documentary Filming

We are excited to announce that YWCA City Shift will be collaborating with 3 Crows Production in the creation of a documentary that showcases the progress and impact of the Peer-Centered Advocacy Council.

At the bottom of this document, you will find the *YWCA BC Release and Consent Form*. If you are interested in participating in the documentary, please fill out the consent form and send it along with this acceptant letter.

**Please note that participating in the documentary is not a requirement of taking part in the Peer-Centered Advocacy Council.** If you wish to **NOT** participate in the documentary, please indicate your preference on the consent form at the end of this document.

### Client Bill of Rights

Every client has the right to receive respectful service. Service providers practice within culturally sensitive frameworks and aim to provide a space free of any discrimination based on age, race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, ethnic background, political views or religion.

## Appendix B (Continued)

Clients are also expected to uphold respectful conduct when accessing YWCA services.

As a client of the YWCA BC, you have the right to

1. Respectful service to feel safe in our programs.
2. Receive our services at your own level of comfort and understanding, particularly when having concurrent services.
3. Be treated with respect regardless of ability, race, status, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion or beliefs.
4. Speak up and be heard without retaliation when you have a concern.
5. Ask questions and be informed about YWCA policies and procedures.
6. Actively take part in deciding about the goals you want to work on and the services you receive.
7. Have your personal information kept private and confidential.
8. Give feedback to the YWCA about how we are doing.
9. Be informed of services and other resources that may be helpful to you in sufficient time to facilitate your decision.
10. Be informed why a service may have been refused, and to be informed of alternative resources.
11. Refuse a service that is offered to you.
12. Adherence to research guidelines and ethics if involved in any.

### Next Steps

To confirm your participation in the Peer-Centered Advocacy Council, please complete the following steps:

1. Please review and sign this Acceptance Letter below to confirm your participation. Please send the signed copy via email to [name] at [email] by Tuesday, December 31st, 2024. **If we do not receive your application by this date, we will be unable to secure your spot on the council.**

If you are having any difficulties, please let [name] know as soon as possible.

## Appendix B (Continued)

- If you are interested in participating in the documentary, please sign the *YWCA BC Release & Photo Consent Form* located at the end of this document. If you are not interested in participating in the documentary, please indicate your preference on the consent form.
- Please take a moment to fill out the Pre-Participation Survey before the first day to help us better tailor your experience in the Peer-Centered Advocacy Council

### Participation Confirmation (Please Sign)

By signing below, you are confirming that you have read the information above and your participation in the Peer-Centered Advocacy Council.

\_\_\_\_\_

Full Name (Signed or printed)

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

We are so excited to walk alongside you on your advocacy journey and encourage you to reach out to [name] if you have any questions or concerns.

### YWCA BC Release & Consent Form

By signing this form, I hereby grant permission to YWCA BC to use photographs, videos, and/or interviews taken of me (or the minor for whom I am the parent/guardian\*, if applicable) during the duration of the City Shift Program in printed, digital and online media, for purposes including but not limited to promotional materials, social media, websites and digital platforms, news articles, newsletters and reports.

- I confirm that I have read the “*YWCA BC / Use of images*” document and understand how my image may be used in YWCA programs, services and promotional materials.

### I also understand that:

- YWCA BC may edit, crop and combine these images, videos or interview quotes with other materials.

## Appendix B (Continued)

- YWCA BC may use these images and interviews for **three years** from the date of consent. After this period, they will not appear in new materials, but any previously used images, videos or text may continue to be reproduced and shared.
- YWCA BC prioritizes participant safety and respects your right to ask questions or withdraw consent at any time. If you have any questions or want to withdraw consent, please contact your program manager or email [email]

### Documentary use (optional):

- I also grant permission for YWCA BC and 3 Crows Production to use photographs, videos, and/or interviews of me (or the minor for whom I am the parent/guardian\*, if applicable) in the City Shift documentary and its associated social media, promotional materials and related content.

If you do not grant permission for YWCA BC to use your likeness in specific ways, please indicate these below:

*\* A parent or guardian must give consent for individuals 18 years of age or younger.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Internal use only

Project: YWCA City Shift	Date:
	Department contact: [name] , [email]

## Appendix C

### Sample of YWCA City Shift's Peer-Centred Advocacy Council Session Arc

Session 1	<b>Introductions &amp; Community Building</b>	<p>This session establishes the foundation of the council.</p> <p>Participants get to know one another, build trust through storytelling, and co-create a community agreement that will guide how the group learns and works together.</p> <p>This session also introduces the council timeline including what participants can expect, how sessions will unfold and how their work will build toward a collective advocacy campaign.</p>
Session 2	<b>Identifying our Advocacy Issue</b>	Participants explore the organization's strategic priorities and begin identifying issues that directly affect them. Through guided discussion, participants create a list of potential advocacy priorities.
Session 3	<b>Dreaming the Future of our Issue</b>	Participants revisit the issues identified in the previous session and work toward consensus. They use structured dialogue and voting tools to select the 1-2 issues the council will focus on.
Session 4	<b>Overview: Organizing for Change</b>	This foundational workshop introduces key concepts in community organizing such as the theory of change, power mapping, campaign structures and the roles people play in advocacy.
Session 5	<b>Overview: Campaign Strategies</b>	Using a real-world campaign example, this session helps participants understand how long-term advocacy unfolds in practice. It highlights strategies, lessons learned and the importance of building public and political support over time.

## Appendix C (Continued)

Session 6	<b>Exploring Advocacy Tactics</b>	This session equips participants with a toolkit of tactics they can use throughout their campaign. They learn to assess the purpose, audience and timing of different approaches to choose what will work best.
Session 7	<b>Hearing from Decision-Makers</b>	A panel of elected officials or decision-makers shares how decisions are made, what information they need and what makes advocacy compelling from their perspective. This session helps participants understand how to engage power holders effectively and confidently.
Session 8	<b>Understanding Government and Jurisdiction</b>	This session clarifies how different levels of government (or other authorities) hold power over various issues. Understanding jurisdiction helps participants determine where to direct their advocacy efforts.
Session 9	<b>Identifying Gaps &amp; Opportunities</b>	At this midpoint, participants review their progress, revisit their community agreement and assess what pieces of their advocacy plan are missing. This session supports alignment and ensures the campaign stays on track before moving into more advanced skills.
Session 10	<b>Impactful Storytelling</b>	This session teaches participants to use storytelling as an advocacy tool. They learn how to craft stories that highlight the issue, uplift their experiences and support their campaign goals.
Session 11	<b>Public Speaking &amp; Media Training</b>	This session prepares participants to speak about their issue in public settings. They learn how to communicate clearly, stay grounded and handle difficult questions.

## Appendix C (Continued)

Session 12	<b>Self Care for Community Organizers</b>	Advocacy work can be emotionally demanding, especially when grounded in lived experience. This session focuses on community care, grounding practices and strategies for sustaining engagement over the long term.
Session 13	<b>Campaign Presentation &amp; YWCA Policy Priorities Review</b>	The YWCA City Shift team compiles and synthesizes insights, priorities and strategies from past sessions into a draft advocacy campaign. During this session, the campaign is presented back to council members for collective review, discussion and refinement. This session also includes a review of YWCA's policy and advocacy priorities to identify areas of alignment and pathways for implementation.
Session 14	<b>Bringing it all together</b>	This session brings all elements of the campaign into alignment. Participants finalize their messaging, tactics, theory of change and materials in preparation for presenting their work publicly.
Session 15	<b>Celebration</b>	A closing celebration to reflect on the work and care given from participants to the council's advocacy work.
Post Session	<b>Campaign Launch &amp; Community Celebration Event</b>	A City Shift wrap-up celebration bringing together community partners, decision-makers and council members for the premiere of the documentary, participant storytelling and a shared moment of reflection and recognition.

## Appendix D

### Sample of City Shift Council cost breakdown

Category	Budget	Description
Honouraria	\$28,500	Council members received a \$100 grocery gift card after each session.  Across 19 participants and 15 monthly sessions, honoraria totaled:  19 participants × 15 sessions × \$100 = \$28,500
Transportation Support	\$2,850	Most council members lived across Metro Vancouver and commuted to the YWCA program centre in Downtown Vancouver by transit or car.  To support the transportation needs of participants, we allocated \$10 per participant per session:  19 participants × 15 sessions × \$10 = \$2,850
Childminding		To ensure the council was fully accessible for parents, we engaged three childminders for each session.  Childminders were compensated \$30 per hour and provided an average of 3 hours of support per session.  3 childminders × 3 hours × \$33/hour × 15 sessions = \$4455

### Appendix D (Continued)

Category	Budget	Description
Supplies	\$500	Additional supplies were purchased to support council learning including binders, stationary, flipcharts and more.  Please note that some supplies for the council were absorbed by the organization because they were already available at no additional cost.
Supplies Children’s activities (games, toys, crafts, etc.,)	\$750	A budget of \$50 per session was set aside for childminding activities (games, toys, crafts), totaling \$750 across 15 sessions.
Meals and refreshments	\$9,000	We allocated an average of \$600 per session to provide meals, refreshments and beverages for council members.  \$600 × 15 sessions = \$9,000

### Appendix E

#### Feedback Survey

1. What are your overall thoughts or reflections on the Monday, October 20th meeting?
2. What could we improve for future meetings?
3. Are there any topics you would like us to explore in future sessions?
4. Do you have any additional feedback you would like to share?

#### Progress Survey

1. Please complete the following questions:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I can see how my personal or community experiences connect to larger systems and structures in society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident in my ability to influence change on the issues that are important to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I can use my personal experience to influence societal attitudes and beliefs, contribute to policy discussions and/or influence decision-makers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand the different levels of government (municipal, provincial and federal) and know which elected officials (councillors, MLAs or MPs) I can connect with to bring forward issues that are important to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident speaking to decision-makers about issues that are important to me or my community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident speaking in public or to the media about issues that are important to me or my community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can identify different tools or approaches for creating change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>









## Acknowledgement

The YWCA City Shift team would like to thank and acknowledge Trudi Goels, Co-Founder of Ablaze Services, for supporting the content of this guidebook. Trudi was the facilitator of the Peer-Centered Advocacy Council.

We also would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to all the members of the Peer-Centered Advocacy Council, staff of YWCA BC Single Mothers Support Services and 3 Crows Productions.

## Connect with us

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-  [instagram.com/ywcabc](https://www.instagram.com/ywcabc)
-  [facebook.com/YWCABC](https://www.facebook.com/YWCABC)
-  [youtube.com/@YWCABC](https://www.youtube.com/@YWCABC)



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